

Message Text

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12

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 AID-05

OMB-01 /060 W

----- 105612

R 200150Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2860

INFO CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

COMIPAC HONOLULU HI

COMUSSAG NKP THAILAND

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 1852

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT MILI VS (COL LE TRUNG THANH)

SUBJECT: VINH LONG'S NEW PROVINCE CHIEF

FOLLOWING SENT ACTION AMEMBASSY SAIGON FROM AMCONSUL CAN THO
19 FEB 1975 BEING REPEATED FOR YOUR INFORMATION

QUOTE CAN THO 062

1. FIRST IMPRESSION OF NEW VINH LONG PROVINCE CHIEF, COL THANH ARE FAVORABLE. ON VISIT TO PROVINCE IN COMPANY OF SPECIAL TASK FORCE COMMANDER, COL NGUYEN DINH VINH, PRINCIPAL OFFICER WAS BRIEFED BY COL LE TRUNG THANH ON PROVINCE SECURITY SITUATION AND ON HIS PLAN TO REDRESS BADLY ERODED GVN CONTROL.

2. COL THANH ASSERTED, AND COL VINH AGREED, THAT HIS PREDECESSOR'S DISHONEST REPORTING CONTRIBUTED TO PRESENT SORRY STATE OF SECURITY. (DECEMBER HES FOR VINH LONG CARRIES 99"V" HAMLETS, AN INCREASE FROM 4 "V" HAMLETS REPORTED THE MONTH BEFORE. THIS FOLLOWED ORDER FROM CORPS COMMANDER TO REPORT HONESTLY.)

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3. SINCE ASSUMING CHARGE ON FEB 14, COL THANH HAS DEVELOPED

OUTLINES OF CAMPAIGN PLAN. FIRST PRIORITY IS TO BE GIVEN SECURING BROAD ENVELOPE ON EITHER SIDE OF NATIONAL ROUTE 4. SECOND IS TO FIRMLY CONTROL ROUTE 7A TO VINH BINH. THIRD IS TO OPEN ROUTE 16 ACROSS MIDDLE OF PROVINCE FROM BA CONG TO TAM BINH DISTRICT TOWN. FOURTH PRIORITY IS OPENING OF ROUTE 39 ALONG VINH LONG-VINH BINH BORDER, A LONG STANDING VC BASE AREA AND INFILTRATION CORRIDOR (SEE CAN THO A-15, DATED 12/12/74).

4. ULTIMATE OBJECTIVE OF PLAN IS TO SECURE MAIN ROADS BISECTING PROVINCE. RESULT IDEALLY WOULD BE RESTRICTION OF FREE MOVEMENT BY NVA/VC THROUGH PROVINCE. PROCESS, IF CARRIED FAR ENOUGH, WOULD CONTAIN VC IN POCKETS WHERE THEY COULD BE ELIMINATED OR ALLOWED GRADUALLY TO WITHER.

5. PROVINCE CHIEF REALIZES DIFFICULTY OF TASK HE HAS SET HIMSELF BUT IS GUARDEDLY OPTIMISTIC AND ENCOURAGINGLY AGGRESSIVE IN SPIRIT. TASK FORCE COMMANDER VINH HAS PROMISED SUPPORT FROM CORPS RESOURCES. INITIAL IMPRESSION IS THAT FIRST STEP HAS BEEN TAKEN TOWARD RE-ESTABLISHING GVN CONTROL IN THIS STRATEGICALLY LOCATED PROVINCE BY PROVIDING FORCEFUL MILITARY LEADERSHIP. SIGNED MCNAMARA
END QUOTE MARTIN

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